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ABSTRACT

This paper demonstrates, with reference to the Samal of Tagtabon Island, how the structure of local domestic groups and the statistical distribution of residence types can be derived from a detailed description of the decision rules used by Samal native actors themselves in making, evaluating and predicting residence choices. Considering the census data alone, a matrilineal principle or bias appears to dominate the selection of residence locations. But this apparent matrilineal tendency is an artifact of the rule which Tagtabon Samal use in making decisions about residence, a rule which makes no reference to any matrilineal principle. Nine assessments (decision criteria) for residence rules are given. In the selection of a mode of residence a person's age category is of primary importance. In terms of residence locale, the most important phenomenon by far is the preference ranking of kin classes, operative in residence decisions throughout a person's life. (CFM)

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DECISION-MAKING AND RESIDENCE ON TAGTABON ISLAND

William H. Geoghegan

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DECISION-MAKING AND RESIDENCE ON TAGTABON ISLAND

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As analysts who often concentrate our attention on behavior patterns and group structure at the societal level, we have frequently failed to give adequate consideration to the manner in which individual native actors make the decisions that, in the long run, produce the societal phenomena we want to explain. In this paper, with reference to the Samal of Tagtabon Island, I should like to demonstrate how the structure of local domestic groups and the statistical distribution of residence types can be derived from a detailed description of the decision rules used by Samal native actors themselves in making, evaluating, and predicting residence choices.

Tagtabon is a Philippine fishing village of some 300 inhabitants, located on Tagtabon Island approximately a mile east of the southern tip of the Zamboanga Peninsula in Mindanao. The inhabitants, all of whom are Muslims, regard themselves as divided into three major groups of the Eastern Samal: Balangingi', Daundung, and Kabinga'an, named after the islands from which they migrated some 50 to 100 years ago. All three groups speak essentially identical dialects of Eastern Samal; and, for purposes of this paper, can be thought of as culturally identical as well. Social organization is along essentially cognatic lines; and this is reflected in the kinship terminology, marriage preferences, and the general ideology of descent, inheritance, interpersonal relations, and so on. The preferred spouse, for example, is the closest possible kinsman with whom the relationship would not be incestuous; that is, beyond the range of first and second degree kin.

The high incidence of cousin marriage (involving first cousins of all four types) indicates the extent to which the preference is put into practice.

[When I use the term "Samal" in the following discussion, I hope it will be understood that I am referring to the Samal of Tagtabon Island. So far as I know, however, these remarks also apply to most Eastern Samal resident in the area of Zamboanga City.]

A survey of the usual census data for Tagtabon would indicate that post-marital residence ~~is~~ normally alternates ~~ambilocal~~ between husband's and wife's kin for several years, followed by establishment of an independent household near the wife's close female kin. People beyond their productive years, and unmarried adults, tend to reside with close female kin, generally with parents, children, or siblings. There is, consequently, a high incidence of laterally and lineally extended households. The larger residential groups consist of clusters of from four to seven houses organized around a core of matrilineally related adult women. Each such cluster (of which there are five on Tagtabon) has one or two old women who act as gossip co-ordinators, a sheltered work area which serves as a meeting place, and a high rate of internal interaction relative to interaction with other groups. Considering the census data alone, a matrilineal principle or bias appears to dominate the selection of residence locations. In sixteen cases of lineally or laterally extended households, for example, fourteen extensions involved matri-kin of the household heads. Twelve of the sixteen cases were extensions on the wife's side. All four cases of extensions on the husband's side involved the husband's matrilineal

relatives. Only two clear-cut cases of patrilineal extension were recorded. This, plus the predominant matrilineal structuring of household clusters, would certainly seem to go against the strict bilaterality observed in other domains of social organization.

But, quite to the contrary, the ensuing discussion should demonstrate that this apparent matrilineal tendency is an artifact of the rule which Tagtabon Samal use in making decisions about residence -- a rule, moreover, which makes no reference to any matrilineal principle and is quite consistent with their professed bilateral ideology.

On Tagtabon, a person's residence (or patanna'an) is where he customarily eats, not where he sleeps, nor necessarily where he performs the majority of his daily activities. People who share a common residence are, by the Samal definition, those who customarily share the same cooking facilities. A residence, therefore, is not necessarily coterminous with a particular physical dwelling, though this is usually the case.

There are two features basic to any particular residence choice: mode and locale. Mode refers to the manner or type of residence which a person or couple engages in; and locale refers to the social and/or geographical location of that residence.

In the native classification of residence modes (given on page 1 of the handout), we find a basic division into those which represent a short-term pattern, and those which represent a longer-term, more permanent pattern. (The difference is somewhat analogous to that between "temporary" and "legal" residence in most parts of the United States.) There are two basic short-term modes: maglihan, which refers to temporary residence for occupational or avocational

reasons (as, for example, living somewhere for a few weeks to fish), and magtibaw, which refers to what we would commonly call "visiting". These two modes will not concern us here.

Of the permanent modes, there are two basic conceptual types. The first is magselle'selle', which might be glossed as "changing around". Magselle'selle' involves alternating residence between two households, with time being divided equally between them, and the length of stay varying from two weeks to three months. It is typically associated with newly married couples, and ordinarily lasts until the couple is able to finance the building or purchase of a house of their own.

The other type of permanent residence can be referred to by the term patanna'an to'od ("'pure' residence") or, as is more often the case, by the phrase patanna' ma X (resides at or with X), where X indicates locale and may be replaced by either the phrase luma'-na ("his house"), a relationship term, a personal name, or a geographical location. For example, we have:

patanna' ia ma luma'-na. "He resides in his own house."

patanna' ia ma ina'-na. "He resides with his mother."

These two sentences illustrate a basic conceptual sub-division of this mode of residence into two subsidiary modes: residing in one's own household, and residing in another person's household. The latter usually implies sharing a house, although this is not a requirement and there are exceptions. Residing with another person does imply, however, that one shares cooking facilities with him.

No matter what mode of residence is in effect, its locale can be specified by citing a particular relationship term or kin class;

as in the example I just gave -- patanna' ia ma ina'-na, "He resides with his mother". The set of kin classes includes, in addition to those named by the usual kin terms and their variants, kampung ("distant kinsman", relationship unknown) and a'a saddi ("non-kinsman"). Locale, considered in this sense, is a household in which or near which residence is established. The identity of the household, at this level of specificity, is known only in terms of a relationship between Ego (or his or her spouse) and a person residing in the household. At a more specific level, that individual is named; at a more general level, the geographical location is given.

We can move now to a consideration of the form and content of rules used in selecting the mode and locale of residence. I have dealt with the theory underlying the structure of decision (or "code") rules of this type elsewhere, and shall limit myself here to a brief description of their general form.

A decision rule describes an implicational relationship between two bodies of information, called "input" and "output" information, in such a way that when the necessary input information is known, a unique output is implied. This input information is gathered by making a series of evaluations or assessments of specific entities with respect to a set of variables. The assessments required for the Samal residence rules are listed on pages 1 and 2 of the handout. Unless otherwise indicated, the entity being assessed is the person or couple concerning whose residence a decision is being made. Consider the first assessment listed, for example, the one glossed "age group". In making this assessment we determine the correspondence between the person under consideration and a particular age category.

If this person is unmarried but has reached marriageable age, then he is classified subul if male or bujjang if female. The categories of an assessment are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive of the relevant variable.

Referring now to page 5 of the handout, we find the assessments and outputs for the residence-mode rule presented in the form of a flow diagram. The diamonds represent assessments and are labeled by capital letters which refer to the list on pages 1 and 2. The arrows indicate the possible results of these assessments -- answers to the questions implied by the assessments, if you prefer -- and they are labeled accordingly. After making each assessment and determining the result, the corresponding arrow indicates either the next assessment to be made or an output. The outputs are represented as rectangles in the diagram and appear on the right-hand side of the page. A decision rule of this type, it will be noted, describes not only what information must be assessed, but also the order in which it is to be treated. We can consider a hypothetical case in order to gain some familiarity with the way the rule operates.

Suppose we consider a woman, just widowed, about 40 years old, and the mother of several dependent children. Assume also that she and her husband had a house of their own before his death, and that the house has now passed into her hands. We can apply this rule to decide which mode of residence is appropriate in her particular case. The first assessment, labeled A, indicates that we should consider the woman's age group. Since she has been married and is still in her productive years, she would be classified matto'a, which I have coded a_3. Given this information, we should next consider her marital

status: assessment M. Since she has no husband (insa'nia' halla-na) the result of the assessment is m_2; and we therefore procede to assessment L, which deals with the viability of her household (if she has one). This assessment requires the use of a second rule (given on pages 3 and 6 of the handout). Let us assume that the result of applying this "viability" rule is that her household is viable, l_1. Finally, assessment C asks if she has any co-resident children. The answer is "yes", ania' anak-na maqbea', giving c_1 as the result. The indicated output is O_2, which says that residence in one's own household is appropriate. If we should apply the rule for her children, who are in age groups a_1 or a_2, we would find that output O_1 is immediately implied: that is, residence in another's household. Application of the locale rule would indicate that their mother's household is appropriate. We would therefore expect to find the woman and her children staying together, probably in the house left by the deceased husband.

A list containing all the possible paths through this rule is given on page 3 of the handout.

The viability rule that I mentioned just a moment ago operates in the same way. When applied to a household identified by locale (X), we find that the household is viable if Ego or the relative specifying locale has a house, if Ego can carry on his occupation there, and if he gets along with the people he would be residing with or near. If any of these conditions happen not to obtain, the household is not viable for Ego.

One might ask whether or not there is any test for the descriptive validity of decision rules such as those we have been considering.

In fact, there are several, all of which have been applied with favorable results to the rules described in this paper. One of these tests, in which the frequency distribution of residence modes is estimated from the rule and compared with the actual distribution, shall be presented here.

Probabilities for each of the paths given on page 3 were calculated from the conditional probability distributions for assessments listed on pages 1 and 2. (These assessment probabilities were derived from data collected during the second of two censuses of the island.) Since the paths in a rule represent mutually exclusive events, the probabilities of all paths leading to the same output could be summed to give the estimated probability for that output. Because the rule theoretically should account for all possible residence choices, these output probabilities were multiplied by the number of individuals in the entire population (297 to be exact) to give expected frequencies for each of the residence modes. These figures are presented on page 3 where they are compared with the actual values taken from the census. The two distributions are quite similar, and warrant our acceptance of the rule's descriptive validity.

Because of the anthropological concern with post-marital residence, a similar test was run for paths 3, 4, 5, and 6, which deal only with married adults still in their productive years. For the 53 married couples residing permanently on Tagtabon (including cases of magselle'selle', or alternating residence, where one of the households is on the island), the rule predicts 2.8 couples residing in another's household; the actual number is 3. It gives 42.2 living in their own house; the actual number is 41. And it predicts 8

couples engaged in maqselle'selle', where the actual number is 9. We may conclude that the rule is particularly accurate in handling post-marital residence.

Before commenting on the manner in which locale is determined, I should like to review very briefly the substantive content of the mode-selection rule. First of all, children, bachelors, spinsters, and old people beyond the point where they can adequately provide for themselves reside with others and do not maintain a separate household. Married adults with a viable household of their own, and where both partners are together, will live in their own house. If they do not have a viable household, but do have the means to obtain a house fitting these conditions, either through purchase, construction, a gift, etc., they would be expected to establish such a mode of residence. If the means are lacking, and they are newly married, they should reside maqselle'selle'. If they have been married for more than about four years, they would be expected to have joined another's household (given that they do not have the means of establishing their own). Adults who have been married but lack a spouse through divorce or death, and have a viable household of their own, would maintain residence there if there were co-resident children. If not (as, for example, in the case of a divorced and childless woman) the person would be expected to join another's household. The same holds for all divorced or widowed adults who have no house of their own.

The process used to determine the locale of residence is somewhat different from that used to determine its mode. A rule of the type we have been considering is employed -- this is the "viability"

rule mentioned earlier -- but the difference lies in the way it is put to use. A locale is decided upon by taking a list of kin classes, ranked in terms of preference, applying the viability rule to particular households representing the kin classes one by one, until a household is discovered which is viable with respect to Ego. In other words, he selects a household corresponding to the most preferred kin class for which viability can be maintained. In the case of maq-selle'selle', two locales are selected by processing two lists, one for the husband as Ego, and one for the wife as Ego. For all modes of residence, the viability rule is applied to the household in which the individual or couple would be residing. If this is their own household, the rule considers its viability with respect to a physical location as near as possible to a person of the specified kin class.

The actual preference ranking of kin classes is accomplished by a procedure illustrated on page 4 of the handout. We are given a set of four variables used to describe the kin classes, and these variables are ranked in terms of their relative importance. For each variable, its component values are themselves ranked in terms of preference. For example, the third-ranked variable is C, "sex of Alter"; and of its two values, female (denda) is preferred to male (lella). For purposes of ranking, kin classes are described in terms of their values on each of the four variables. To determine which of two kin classes is preferred, we compare their descriptions until we find the most important variable on which they differ. The preferred kin class is the one which has the higher value on that variable.

The four variables used in this ranking are listed at the top of page 4 in order of importance. The most important is A, "degree of relation", the number of links between Ego and the nearest member of the kin class being considered. The last two values are kampung (distant kinsman) and saddi ("non-kinsman"). The second most important variable is B, "lineality", which refers to the last link in the chain connecting Ego and the kin class. Lineal (i.e. parent-child link) is preferred to lateral (a sibling link). The third-ranked variable, "sex of Alter", we have already mentioned. The fourth is D, "sex of Ego", which comes into play only when we are considering a married couple who will reside in a single household. Again, female is preferred to male. For example, given two kin classes of the same degree, lineality, and sex, a representative of this class on the wife's side is preferred. In one sense, this is just the reciprocal of the third variable, "sex of Alter". All other things being equal, association with a female is preferred to association with a male; and hence the affective "pull" upon the wife from her relatives will generally be stronger than the "pull" upon the husband from his.

We should note in passing that members of reciprocal pairs like mother and daughter, for example, are equally preferred. They both are first degree lineal females; and the rule makes no provision for ranking them relative to one another.

To summarize, the ranking of kin classes generated by this process would be the following:

1. mother or daughter
2. father or son
3. sister
4. brother
5. grandmother or granddaughter
6. grandfather or grandson
7. aunt or niece
8. uncle or nephew

etc.

For any married Ego, the wife's relatives of a given type are preferred to the husband's relatives of that type.

Before going on to the kind of domestic groupings these rules generate, let me draw attention to several points which might help to characterize the rules' operation. First, the selection of residence locale operates independently of decisions regarding mode. No matter what the mode, there is a fixed preference ordering for the kinds of relatives one associates himself with in establishing or maintaining a residence -- whether this be joint residence, alternation between two households, or physical proximity. The ordering is independent of an individual's age, sex, marital status, and so forth; it is the same for a three-year-old child as for an eighty-year-old widow. The bilateral quality of such decisions is very marked. There is nothing in the preference ranking which gives weight to one side of a person's kindred over the other; nor is there anything which could be classified as preference for residence with a particular group of people. The rule deals with the establishment or maintainence of dyadic bonds between individuals related to one an-

other in specified ways; there is nothing to indicate conscious or unconscious focus on affiliation with domestic or kinship groups of any kind larger than the household, even though groups of people which appear to be organized along some sort of matrilineal principle exist locally as a result of residence choices.

We can see now that such domestic groups -- cores of matrilineally related women and their husbands and unmarried siblings -- are really the cumulative effect of a large number of individual decisions regarding the establishment and maintainence of dyadic relationships. The history of such groups becomes quite clear considered in this light. For example, a woman marries and settles in proximity to her mother and an elder sister. Her daughters do the same as they grow and marry. Her husband dies and she moves in with a daughter and son-in-law. As long as she lives, her daughters and her sister's daughters will come there to settle, barring the possible non-viability of their households if established close-by. To all outward appearances, we have here a localized, matrilineally organized kin group.

Before closing, I would like to suggest what I think are some of the advantages of dealing with residence (and other problems of social organization) in a manner similar to the one presented here: that is, by a treatment based on a description of the actual process of decision-making used by a particular group of native actors. First of all, one can get a precise picture of the role played by the various social and cultural factors which have an effect on residence choices. For example, in the selection of a mode of residence, a person's age category is of primary importance, whereas the length of time married (given that he is married) and the presence of co-

resident children and so on are less important, relatively speaking. To put this in other words, knowing a person's age reduces our uncertainty about his mode of residence much more than knowing whether or not there are co-resident children. Just how much our uncertainty is reduced can be handled empirically by information theory, but that is beyond the scope of this paper. In terms of residence locale, the most important phenomenon by far is the preference ranking of kin classes, operative in residence decisions -- and in a large number of other domains -- throughout a person's life. Household viability, expressed in terms of economic and interpresonal factors, also plays a controlling part.

Secondly, we can talk about social change in a very precise manner, since we can predict changes in the frequency distribution of residence modes and locales from antecedent changes in assessment probabilities. For example, the current probability of a given household being viable from Ego's point of view is about .77. Suppose we knew that this probability had changed, and that we knew exactly how much it had changed. We could then calculate a new set of output probabilities for the three residence modes, giving a precise picture of the <u>quantitative</u> effect of the change in viability upon the entire system of residence choices.

Note that even though a major change may occur in the distribution of residence modes, there has been no immediate change in the culture -- in the "ideational" order if you will. The exact same rule is being applied, though the cumulative effect of a large number of decisions may be altered radically. If such change were carried to the extent that a particular mode of residence were essentially to

die out, we may find a future generation dropping that choice from the set of alternatives, along with whatever assessments would no longer be necessary. At this point we could say that a true instance of cultural change had taken place. We could not, however, have known exactly what happened without knowledge of the actual decision-making process involved.

Decision-making and Residence on Taqtabou Island

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Typology of residence modes:

patanna'an "residence"
- patanna'an ngga'i anotog "irregular/temporary residence"
  - maglihan "residence for occupation, schooling, etc. (temporary)"
  - magtibaw "visiting"
- tattap patanna'an "permanent/habitual residence"
  - magselle'selle' "changing around" ~~(ambilocal)~~ (alternating)
  - patanna'an to'od "'true' residence" (Lit.)
  - or patanna' ma X - "resides with X/at X"
    - patanna' ma K "resides with K" (K = relationship term)
    - patanna' ma luma'-na "lives in his (own) house"

Assessments (decision criteria) for residence rules:

			Probabilities *
A	"age group" (seinggahan umul)		
	a_1	dakanak "child"	.461
	a_2	subul/bujjang "bachelor/spinster"	.160
	a_3	matto'a "adult" (is or has been married)	.358
	a_4	ato'a to'od "old person" (beyond productive years)	.021
M	"marital status" (tagahalla/tagahanda) (current status)		
	m_1	tagahalla/tagahanda "has husband/wife"	.943
	m_2	insa'nia' halla-na/handa-na "has no husband/wife"	.057
H	"house" (ania' luma'-na? "Does he have a house?")		
	h_1	ania' luma'-na "He has a house."]	.774
	h_2	insa'nia' luma'-na "He has no house."	.226

* Probabilities are included for only those assessments used in the rule for mode of residence (R_1^*)

Assessments — Probabilities

L(X) "can reside with X?" (makatanna' ma X?)
(X > luma'-na [his house], K [relationship term])
l_1(X) makatanna' ma X ("can reside with X") .774
l_2(X) ngga'i makatanna' ma X ("cannot reside with X") .226

S "can build, buy, rent... a house?" (makahinang atawa makabilli... luma')
s_1 makahinang... luma' ("can build... house" .100 (est)
s_2 ngga'i makahinang... luma' ("cannot build... house" .900 (est)

I "how long married" (seingqahan toqqol na kinawin?)
t_1 baha'u kinawin "newly married" (5 yrs or less) .741
t_2 toqqol na kinawin "long time married" (5+ yrs) .259

C "have child with him/her?" (ania' anak-na magbea' ma ia?)
c_1 ania' anak-na magbea' "there is a child following" .710
c_2 insa'nia' anak-na magbea' "no child 'following'" .290

J "can do his job at X's place?" (makapaq'usahahan ma lahat-X?)
j_1 makapaq'usahahan lahat-X
j_2 ngga'i makapaq'usahahan lahat-X

G "can get along with X's people?" (makasulut ma siqaam si X?)
g_1 makasulut "can get along"
g_2 ngga'i makasulut "cannot get along"

Outputs for residence-mode rule R_1^*:

O_1 patanna' ma K "reside with K [relationship term]"
O_2 patanna' ma luma'-na; pasekot ni K "live in own house; be near K"
O_3 magselle'selle'; aubus K_i lella, aubus K_j denda "change around; after K_i of husband, then K_j of the wife."

NB: The probability estimates given above are necessarily estimates of conditional probabilities with conditions determined by the ordering of assessments in the rule.

Ordered paths and associated probabilities for residence-mode rule:

Path	Output	Probability
1. $[a_1]$	O_1	.461
2. $[a_2]$	O_1	.160
3. $[a_3, m_1, l_1(\text{luma'-na})]$	O_2	.261
4. $[a_3, m_1, l_2(\text{"}), s_1]$	O_2	.008
5. $[a_3, m_1, l_2(\text{"}), s_2, t_1]$	O_3	.051
6. $[a_3, m_1, l_2(\text{"}), s_2, t_2]$	O_1	.018
7. $[a_3, m_2, l_1(\text{"}), c_1]$	O_2	.011
8. $[a_3, m_2, l_1(\text{"}), c_2]$	O_1	.005
9. $[a_3, m_2, l_2(\text{"})]$	O_1	.005
10. $[a_4]$	O_1	.021

Output probabilities and expected frequencies of residence modes (N = 297):

Output	Probability	Expected	Actual (N = 297)
O_1	.669	198.6	198
O_2	.280	83.3	81
O_3	.051	15.2	18
Totals	1.000	297.1	297

Ordered paths for household "viability" rule:

Path	Output (see assessment L[X],p.?)
1. $[h_1(X), j_1(X), g_1(X)]$	$l_1(X)$
2. $[h_1(X), j_1(X), g_2(X)]$	$l_2(X)$
3. $[h_1(X), j_2(X)]$	$l_2(X)$
4. $[h_2(X)]$	$l_2(X)$

Generation of preference ranking of kin classes:

The preference ranking of kin classes is generated by a lexicographic ordering of the following 4-tuples: $[A_i, B_j, C_k, D_p]$, where

A: degree of relation
$1^o \succ 2^o \succ 3^o \succ \ldots \succ n^o \succ$ kampung $\succ$ saddi

B: lineality
lineal ("vertical") $\succ$ lateral ("horizontal")

C: sex of alter
female (denda) $\succ$ male (lella)

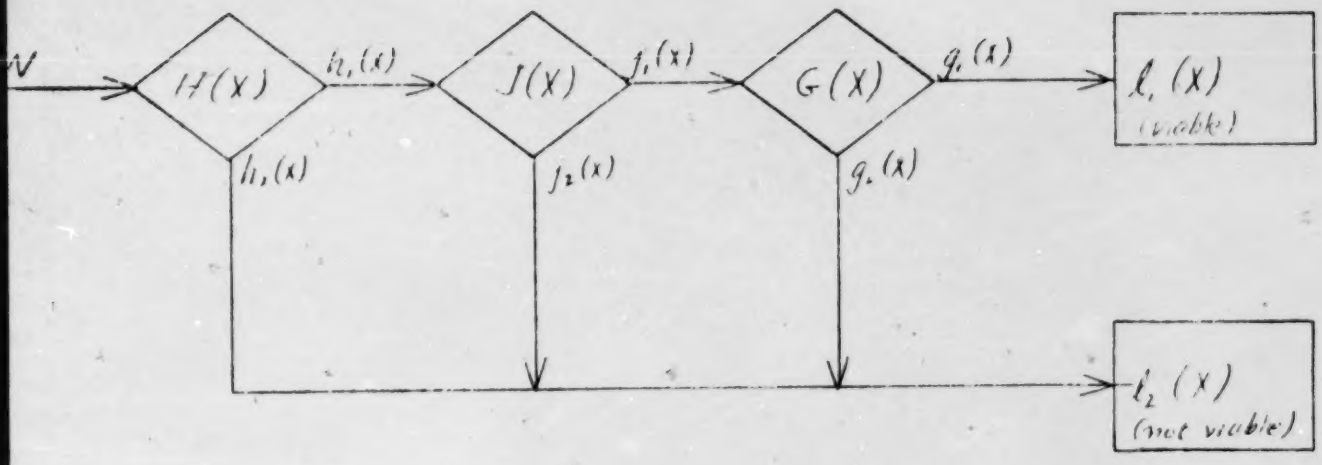
D: sex of Ego (used when considering married couples)
female (denda) $\succ$ male (lella)

Strict preference is indicated by $\succ$.

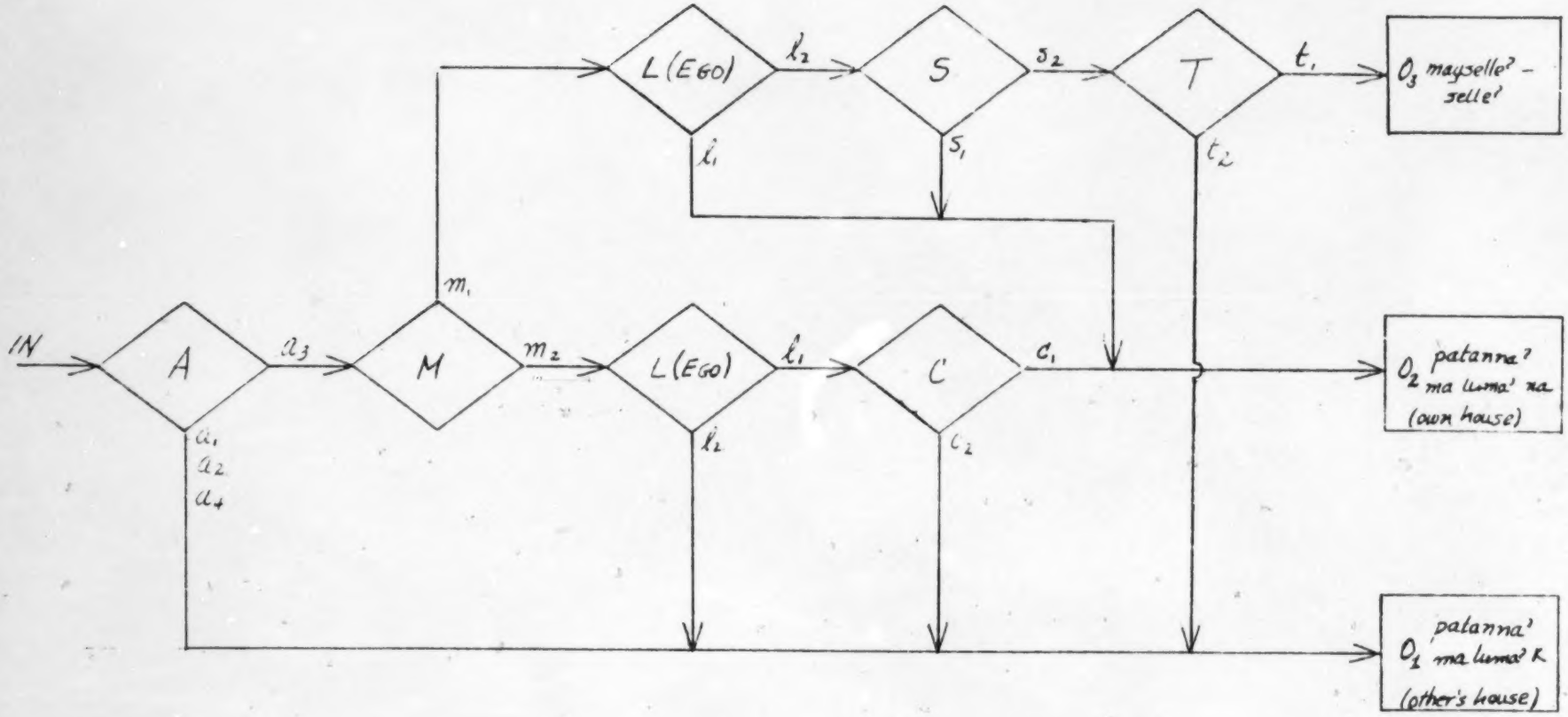
Examples:

$[1^o$, lineal, female, female] ("mother") $\succ$ $[1^o$, lateral, male, female] (Br)
$[2^o$, lateral, F, F] (wife's aunt) $\succ$ $[2^o$, lateral, F, M] (husband's aunt)
$[1^o$, lineal, F, M] (husband's Mo) $\succ$ $[1^o$, lineal, M, F] (wife's Fa)
Etc.
The above preferences include the reciprocals (e.g. daughter $\succ$ son, etc.).

This method of ordering generates the following ranking:
magtali'anak (parent-child) $\succ$
magdanakan (sibling) $\succ$
magtali'umpu (grandparent-grandchild)
magsi'itkamanakan (aunt/uncle - niece/nephew)
etc.
These are internally ranked according to sex of Alter and Sex of Ego (variables C and D, above).



HOUSEHOLD VIABILITY RULE L^*
(Applied to household X)



RESIDENCE-MODE RULE (R_1^*)